

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 NEW DE 07675 271753Z

ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W

-----271756Z 087235 /41

R 271304Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3716

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 7675

NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: TECH, PFOR, IN

SUBJECT: INDIAN NUCLEAR SUPPLY: TARAPUR: CONVERSATION WITH
PRIME MINISTER

REF: STATE 118926

1. I CARRIED OUT THE PRESIDENT'S INSTRUCTIONS ON NUCLEAR MATTERS IN A TALK WITH PRIME MINISTER DESAI MAY 27 AND I BELIEVE THAT THE OUTCOME WAS QUITE SATISFACTORY. THE PRIME MINISTER ACCEPTED WITHOUT HESITATION BOTH OF OUR PRE-CONDITIONS FOR TARAPUR RE-SUPPLY, AND I HOPE THAT THAT CAN PROCEED PROMPTLY. THE ATMOSPHERE OF THE DISCUSSION WAS PARTICULARLY GOOD. DESAI WAS OBVIOUSLY PLEASED TO BE IN COMMUNICATION WITH THE PRESIDENT AND EXPLAINED THAT THE PRESIDENT AND HE "BELIEVED IN PRACTICALLY THE SAME VALUES" (HE LATER SAID THAT BOTH HAD A DEEP FAITH IN GOD AND ASKED HOW COULD THERE BE ANY DIFFERENCE OF OPINION BETWEEN THEM).

2. I MADE THE PRESENTATION ALONG THE LINES OF MY INSTRUCTIONS AND LATER LEFT A PAPER SUMMARIZING THEM, WHICH I AM TRANSMITTING IN A SEPARATE MESSAGE. I SAID THE US WANTED REASSURANCE THAT, AS WE HAVE AGREED ALREADY, INDIA WOULD OBSERVE SAFEGUARDS FOR US NUCLEAR FUEL AND NOT USE IT FOR A DEVICE. I MENTIONED THAT SOME AMERICANS WERE SUSPICIOUS BECAUSE OF THE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 NEW DE 07675 271753Z

1974 EXPLOSION. DESAI REACTED WITH EMOTION, SAYING THERE WAS NO RPT NO QUESTION THAT INDIA WOULD STAND BY ITS AGREEMENTS. INDIA, HE SAID, WOULD CARRY OUT ALL SAFEGUARDS IF FOR NO OTHER REASON THAN SELF-RESPECT. HE THEN LAUNCHED INTO AN INTERESTING DISCUSSION OF THE INDIAN EXPLOSION. MRS. GANDI, HE SAID, HAD NOT BEEN WISE IN THE WAY SHE HAD CARRIED IT OUT. SHE HAD NOT INTENDED TO DEVELOP WEAPONS BUT WAS "POLITICALLY-

MINDED". SHE SHOULD HAVE TAKEN CANADA INTO HER CONFIDENCE.
DESAI SAID HE PLANNED TO SPEAK TO PRIME MINISTER TRUDEAU
ABOUT THIS IN LONDON.

3. DESAI THEN WENT ON TO SAY THAT HE WAS NOT SURE THE
EXPLOSION HAD BEEN NECESSARY. HE DECLARED THAT HE WAS NOT
GOING TO AUTHORIZE ANOTHER EXPLOSION EVEN FOR PEACEFUL PUR-
POSES, BUT IF HE HAD TO DO IT, HE WOULD DO IT PUBLICLY. HE
LATER SAID THERE WAS NO QUESTION OF HAVING ANOTHER EXPLOSION;
EVEN IF IT WAS PROPOSED HE WOULD CONSULT VERY CAREFULLY -
AND CONSULT WITH THE US - BEFORE PROCEEDING. HE ADDED THAT
HE ALSO DID NOT LIKE "THIS SPACE BUSINESS" AND SAID HE WAS
RECONSIDERING WHAT TO DO ABOUT INDIA'S SPACE PROGRAM. INDIA
MUST CONCENTRATE ON FEEDING PEOPLE.

4. WHEN I INDICATED WE WOULD LIKE TO ENTER INTO NEGOTIATIONS
ON TARAPUR AND NON-PROLIFERATION, HE WHOLEHEARTEDLY AGREED.
HE SAID EVEN IF THE US REFUSED TO SUPPLY FUEL FOR TARAPUR,
HE WOULD AGREE TO DISCUSSIONS BUT HE COULD NOT HAVE SUG-
GESTED THIS FIRST HIMSELF; HE WAS THEREFORE GLAD WE HAD
RAISED THE SUBJECT.

5. ON THE SUBJECT OF NON-PROLIFERATION, DESAI SPOKE OF HIS
GREAT CONCERN ABOUT THE DANGER OF CONTINUED SPREAD OF NUCLEAR
WEAPONS, STATING CATEGORICALLY THAT HE WOULD NOT TOUCH SUCH
WEAPONS AND THAT INDIA WOULD REMAIN TRUE TO ITS WORD IN THIS
REGARD. HE SPOKE VIGOROUSLY ABOUT HIS HOPES FOR OUR STRATEGIC
ARMS TALKS WITH THE SOVIETS, SAYING THAT IF THEY WENT WELL
HE THOUGHT CHINA WOULD HAVE TO FALL IN LINE.
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 NEW DE 07675 271753Z

6. DESAI ALSO COMMENTED BRIEFLY ON HIS ATTITUDE TOWARD NU-
CLEAR EXPORT POLICY. HE SAID INDIA DID NOT WANT TO KEEP ITS
NUCLEAR CAPABILITY SECRET BUT DESIRED TO MAKE IT AVAILABLE
TO THOSE WHO WANTED IT FOR PEACEFUL USES. HE CAREFULLY EX-
PLAINED, HOWEVER, THAT INDIA DID NOT WANT TO PASS ON IN ANY
WAY KNOWLEDGE WHICH WOULD BE MIS-USED.

7. I BELIEVE THIS INITIAL TALK WITH DESAI HAS SUCCESSFULLY
CARRIED US THROUGH THE FIRST STEP IN WHAT WILL BE DIFFICULT
NEGOTIATIONS. I WILL SEE FOREIGN SECRETARY MEHTA TOMORROW
TO GET INTO GREATER DETAIL.
GOHEEN

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION, NUCLEAR FUELS, NUCLEAR SAFEGUARDS, NEGOTIATIONS, CAT-B
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 27-May-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977NEWDE07675
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: P850056-2642, N770003-0536
Format: TEL
From: NEW DELHI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t1977059/aaaaahvv.tel
Line Count: 110
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 9974179a-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NODS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Reference: 77 STATE 118926
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21-Oct-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2630838
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: INDIAN NUCLEAR SUPPLY: TARAPUR: CONVERSATION WITH PRIME MINISTER
TAGS: TECH, PFOR, PGOV, PREL, PARM, IN, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/9974179a-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009